Regd. No. L.-294

ان الدين عند الله الاسلام

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

The Review of Religions

Edited by A. Q. NIAZ, B.A.

Vol. XXXVIII, No. 7

July, 1939

CONTENTS

- Theory of the alleged "Lapse" of th Holy Prophet
- Early life of the Promised Messiah —A. R. Dard, M.
- Religious thought in the Muslim Worl to-day
- Reviews

The Review of Religions is an organ of the Ahmadiy Movement in Islam. It is open to all for discussing proble connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man,

QADIAN

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

IF . .

YOU WANT TO KNOW

What Islam Stands for, what is its message for humanity, how does it seek to raise man from the lowest depths of degradation to the highest pinnacles of glory—economically, morally & spiritually,

READ

AHMADIYYAT OR THE TRUE ISLAM

By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad
HEAD OF THE AHMADIYYA COMMUNITY AND THE GREATEST LIVING AUTHORITY ON ISLAM

The book deals in a simple and lucid manner briefly but fully and completely, with all the different aspects of the teachings of Islam.

BOOK DEPOT, QADIAN, Pb., India

Printed at the Ripon Printing Press, Bull Road, Lahore, by Mirza Mohd. Sadiq and published by Sheikh Abdur Rahman Qadiani for Sadar Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya Qadian, Punjab, India

The
Review of Religions

Vol. XXXVIII JULY 1939 No. 7

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

نحمدہٗ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

THEORY OF THE ALLEGED "LAPSE" OF THE HOLY PROPHET: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION*

When persecution of the early converts to Islam on the part of the Quraish of Mecca assumed forms and proportions more than human flesh and blood could bear, and when there seemed to be no end to their sufferings, the Holy Prophet gave them permission to leave Mecca and to go into Ethiopia, saying that the ruler of that country was just who administered the affairs of his state without tyranny or oppression. In order to introduce the reader to Ethiopia nothing need be said, as that unfortunate country, while being overrun by Italy in our own day has been much in the lime-light. Between it and Arabia there lies only a narrow strip of water called the Red Sea. At the time of which we are speaking Ethiopia was a strong empire whose ruler was known among the Arabs by the name of Najjashi—that title being still in use in Arabia with regard to the Emperor of Ethiopia. Commercial contact between the two countries existed even in those early days.† The capital of the Ethiopian empire was a town called Axum, which, near the modern town of Adowa, was the seat of a powerful

*Translated from *Sirat Khatam-ul-Nabiyeen* by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad, M.A.

†Tabri.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

government.* Ashma was the name of the Naj-jashi on the throne at that time.

Having received permission from the Holy Prophet, in the fifth year of his ministery, and in the month of Rajab of the Arab calendar, eleven men and five women left for Ethiopia, the names of the more well-known among them being Usman bin Affan with his wife Roqqaya, who was a daughter of the Holy Prophet; Abdul Rahman bin Auf; Zubairubnul Awan; Abu Huzaifa bin Utba; Usman bin Mazun; Musab bin Umair; and Abu Salma bin Abdul Asad with his wife Umme Salma. It should be noted here that in this group of migrants most of the men were such as belonged to powerful Quraish tribes, which fact is significant as it indicates that (*i*) even those Muslims who belonged to powerful and influential families were not secure against persecution; (*ii*) and that the others were so weak and helpless that they had not the financial means necessary for the journey.

On arriving at Shoaiba, an Arab seaport of those days, this small band had the good luck to find a ship ready to cross the Red Sea, and on this they secured a passage, sailing away at once. When the the Quraish came to know that the party had left Mecca, they were much chagrined and set off in pursuit. As it was, however, they arrived at Shoaiba too late, and had to return to Mecca baulked of their wish. In Ethiopia the refugees found peace and religious freedom—the shelter and protection given to them by the ruler of Ethiopia being still remembered by the Muslim world with the deepest feelings of gratitude, this being the reason why Muslims all over the world were so deeply touched by the Ethiopian question.

As some historians have related, however, not

*Chamber's Encyclopædia.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

much time had passed since their arrival in Ethiopia when a rumour somehow reached them that the Quraish had all accepted Islam, and that Mecca was enjoying perfect peace in consequence, the Muslims no longer being subject to persecution. On hearing this, some of the emigrants, without pausing to think at all as to the veracity of the news, at once set out on the return journey. But on nearing Mecca they found, to their sorrow, that there was no truth whatever in the rumour, whereupon some of them retraced their steps immediately to Ethiopia, while others entered Mecca quietly and secretly, or under the protection of some influential man. This took place in the month of Shawwal of the 5th year of the ministry – *i.e.*, only two and a half or three months, at the most, after they had set out from Mecca. This point has a significance, as will be seen presently, and should be clearly grasped.

These are the facts as related by some historians. The rumour referred to above was entirely baseless, and, quite conceivably, may have been put into circulation by the Quraish, calculating that by this means they might succeed in luring the fugitives back to Mecca. On closer scrutiny, however, the whole story of the rumour and the refugees returning from Ethiopia for that reason, would appear to be doubtful. If it be taken for granted that such a rumour had indeed come into existence, it is likely that it arose out of an incident which has been set forth in the Bokhari. This incident is as follows: On one occasion the Holy Prophet recited, in the Kaaba, the closing portion of that chapter of the Holy Quran which is called "Alnajam." A number of the Meccan chiefs and some Muslims, too, were present on the occasion. At the end of the recitation when the Holy Prophet performed *Sijdah* (prostration before God), as is done by the Muslims when certain portions of the Quran are recited, the Muslims then present, as well as non-Muslims, all joined in that act of devotion.*

*Bokhari "Tafsir Sura Najm."

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

In the Bokhari it is not mentioned why the non-Muslims joined the Muslims in this *sijdah*, but the occurrence seems natural and easy to understand if we bear in mind why the Muslims perform *sijdah* at the end of their recitation of certain portions of the Holy Quran. These are portions which set forth the greatness and glory of Almighty God; and the porstration done after reciting these passages is by way of a physical symbol of the inner spirit of humility, complete submission and obedience which characterises the attitude of every Muslim towards God. The passages which the Holy Prophet recited on this occasion dwell with surpassing literary excellence, vigour and impressiveness, on the Unity of God, His all pervading presence, His power and glory, and His innumerable blessings upon mankind. Then, in words full of awe and grandeur, the Quraish have been warned that, should they persist in opposing the Holy Prophet with mischief and wickedness, ignoble machinations and vulgar meannesses, they would meet their fate as did all those who opposed the earlier prophets of God. The last verses call upon them to obey God and to fall down in worship before Him. When a passage of this kind was recited by the magnetic personality of the Holy Prophet, with a surge of unfathomable emotions brimming over from his heart as the words fell from his lips, the effect upon the audience may well be imagined. Carried away by the spell of the moment, it is no matter for surprise if the non-Muslims, too, prostrated themselves when the Muslims did so at the end of the recitation. On such occasions the human mind is often deeply impressed in spite of itself, and under the momentary impulse man sometimes behaves in a manner which runs counter to his sober opinions. Wet eyes during the performance of tragic scenes on the theatrical stage are not uncommon, although members of the audience are well aware that the tragedy which wrings their heart is mere play, without any reality whatsoever. But still they can not control their tears. Again, during moments of sudden calamity even atheists turn to thoughts of God, although such ideas do not generally

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
find favour with them.

It should be remembered here that the Quraish of Mecca were not atheists. That they should have been so deeply affected by the passage in question is, therefore, not to be wondered at. Such reactions of the mind, however, are transitory, the man so affected reverting almost immediately afterwards to his usual mental poise. Something like this must have happened on the occasion in question. As soon as the spell of the moment was passed, they were as good idolaters again as they had been before.

If the story of the refugees' return on account of the above-mentioned rumour is correct, then it must have been the occurrence just set forth that gave rise to it.

It is to be mentioned at this point, that, in connection with the migration to Ethiopia some historians relate a very curious story with regard to the Quraish having joined the Muslims in the *Sijdah*. They say that it was the earnest desire of the Holy Prophet that some revelation should come to attract the Quraish towards him, and to mitigate their hatred. So, in reciting the passage in question, when he reached the verse: "Have you not seen the *Lat* and the *Uzza* and the *Manat*" (all these are names of idols worshipped in Mecca) the devil utilised the opportunity to put the following words into his mouth as part of the text: "These are exalted idols and their intercession is to be desired." When the Quraish heard these words, say these historians, they were greatly over-joyed, naturally thinking that Mohammad had, at long last, recognised worship of their idols as part of his creed; and that, consequently, when the Muslims prostrated, they also did likewise, a compromise having been effected thereby. But the angel Gabriel, coming to the Holy Prophet after the incident, enlightened him the point of this error, expunging the words prompted by the devil, and replacing them with those which now form part of the Holy Quran. News regarding the

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

compromise spread, and reached Ethiopia, however, before its contradiction had gone so far abroad, and the refugees set out on their way back. This is the surprising story which some historians have related, and which all European writers have accepted without proper scrutiny, hastening to base on it their theory of the Holy Prephet's "lapse," as they call it. But, properly tested according to the canons of history, the story is quite absurd. In the first place the more reliable historians have all rejected it outright—Aini, Qazi Ayaz, Allama Nawvi, for instance, who have thrashed out the question, and finally rejected the idea entirely. Allamah Aini says: "The story is absolutely without truth, both when judged according to the canons of narration, or tested according to reason and common sense".* Qazi Ayas says: "Careful and reliable sources do not mention it as the story is charactarised by uncertainty and infirmity, and the chain of narrators through which it has come down is extremely unreliable. It contains obvious fallacies, moreover, and the chain of its narration does not reach up to the Holy Prophet or his companions".† Nawvi's verdict, too, is identical with Aini: "There is no element of truth in the story, when treated according to the cannons of historical narration."‡ The *Siha Sitta*, the most reliable and authentic works of Hadith, nowhere mention it, although the incident of the recitation of Surah Najm and of the Quraish Chiefs then present having joined the Muslims in performing the *sijdah* is to be met with in their pages—a circumstance which indicates that the story must have come before the compilers, but was rejected by them.

Similarly the great commentators of the Holy Quran, also, have condemned the story as palpably false and absurd, this being the verdict of Imam Razi,§ to mention only one. From among the leaders of the

*Aini, *Sharha Bokhari.*
†*Shifa*, Qazi Ayaz.
‡Nauvi's *Sharha Muslim.*
§*Tafsir Kabir*, chapter "Sura Najm".

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Sufi Movement, to take one instance, the great Sufi Ibni Arabi says: "There is no reality whatever in this story." *

Studying Surah Najm itself we find that the chapter, from beginning to end, is a strong and clear refutation of Idolatry, this nature of its contents being such as precludes the possibility of the Holy Prophet having sought to interpolate a passage into it in favour of the very evil which the whole chapter aims at removing. Two statements, each in direct and extreme contradiction of the other, can not proceed from the same mouth in one and the same breath.

In addition, the idea that the Holy Prophet attempted to compromise with the Idolaters at the cost of the most fundamental principle of his religion is so far out of harmony with his character and personality, and the story of his life, that common-sense unhesitatingly condemns the view. The Holy Prophet, even before the commencement of his ministry was thoroughly disgusted with Idolatry: that he should have begun to incline towards it after he had received a direct command from God Almighty to fight against it and to preach a new religion based on the central idea of the worship of the one and only true God—this is a preposterous notion. As is clearly borne out by the events of his life, he remained true to the principles embodied in the Quran which says: "Futile is the desire on their (the Idolaters') part that you should comprise with them by giving partial and outward recognition to their views so that they may do likewise with you."† According to the Quran, therefore, it was not the Holy Prophet that desired compromise, but the non-believers; and the Holy Prophet's reaction to their desire is described by the Quran by calling it a "futile desire."

Now there remains the question: How did the story originate? On this point scholars of

*Zurqani.
†Surah Noon, raku, 1.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
the stamp and standing of Qastlani and Zurqani have given an explanation which appears to be true. According to this view, when the Holy Prophet was reciting the passage in question in the Kaaba, and when he reached the words: "Have you seen the *Lat*, the *Uzza* and the *Manat*," some one from among the Quraish then present must have cut into the Holy Prophet's recitation with the words: "These are exalted Idols whose intercession is to be desired," in which case part of the audience quite conceivably would fall into doubt as to whether the words had really been spoken by some one else or by the Holy Prophet himself. Interruptions of this kind are frequent in our own day, and the psychology which prompts them being a universal feature of human character, there is sufficient ground to believe that the audiences addressed by the Holy Prophet must have behaved in much the same way as audiences always do the world over when they have to listen to views which call forth passionate opposition on their part. In the case of the Holy-Prophet and his opponents, moreover, it is not mere deductive or inductive reasoning that we have to go upon inorder to establish that he must have experienced interruptions of this kind: We have sure knowledge that he actually did. We read in the Quran that the opponents of Islam used to advise each other saying: "Don't listen to the Quran when it is read to you; on such occasions cause disturbance and divert the attention of the audience by frequent and noisy interruptions." Another circumstance which lends weight to this explanation is the fact that prior to Islam the Arabs, while going the rounds of the Kaaba on the occasion of the pilgrimage, used to repeat this same identical expression.

In view of these considerations it is more than likely that when the Holy Prophet reached the words "Have you seen the *Lat*, the *Uzza* and the *Manat*," some Idolater interrupted, as was their habit, with the words: "These are exalted Idols and their intercession is to be desired," giving some people the

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

impression that the words had been uttered by the Holy Prophet as part of the text he was reciting. This view is supported by Qazi Ayaz, Ibni Jarir, Imam Razi and Hafiz Ibni Hajar as well, who are scholars of the highest rank.

To sum up the discussion, what happened actually was probably this. The Holy Prophet was reciting the last portions of Surah Najm when the above-mentioned interruption was caused by some one in the course of the recitation. At its end, however, when the Muslims prostrated themselves before God, as is always done by them when they read the passage in question through the non-believers too, carried away by the force of the passage, the personality and emotions of the Holy Prophet, and under the spell of the moment as it were, involuntarily joined in that act of obeisance. But as soon as the momentary spell was broken, they woke up to the bitter realisation that by their weakness they had brought disgrace upon themselves and the contempt and ridicule of their compatriots and co-religionists. In their subsequent attempts to give some colour to the occurrence that should take away the disgrace, when they recalled the interruption, they perceived it gave them a good opportunity to remove the stigma from themselves by saying that their action was the result of the compromise declared by Mohammad through recognition of the dignity of the Meccan Idols, pretending that the words had been uttered by Mohammad. In this way the curious story came into existence, and we all know that when there are parties interested in keeping a lie alive as a means of casting an aspersion upon some adversary, there is no fabrication, however obvious, that can not be garbled into a semblance of likelihood and passed into currency.

But there is another circumstance which throws the story of the rumour itself and the alleged return of the refugees on that account into grave doubt—the various dates mentioned by historians in this connection, *i.e.*, that of departure of the migrants, the

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
date on which the incident of prostration in the Kaaba took place, and the date on which the refugees are said to have arrived back in Mecca. The three dates mentioned respectively are the early part of the month of Rajab in the 5th year of the Ministry, month of Ramzan during the same year, and the month of Shawwal of the same year. Thus, counting from the day on which the migrants left Mecca to the time when they are alleged to have returned, we get a period of from two to three months at the most. But it is to be remembered that the return of the refugees was due to the rumour that the Meccans had all accepted Islam, which rumour in turm rose out of the incident of the *sajdah*, so that between the day the rumour started and the time when the refugees returned, there is an interval of one month only. Now keeping in view the slowness of the means of communication in those days, it is out of the question that this interval was long enough to enable two journeys to be completed between the capital of Ethiopia and Mecca—*i e.* the journey of the agency which carried the rumour and journey of the refugees back to Mecca. In order to proceed to Axum from Mecca in those days one had to reach the southern sea board of Arabia to take a boat (which was not available at a moment's notice) to cross the Red Sea, and then to complete another arduous journey on land from the African coast to Axum—a journey which under ordinary circumstances took from a month to a month and a half one way. The very facts on which the story is based are, therefore, highly doubtful.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

EARLY LIFE OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH

Mirza Ghulam Murtaza was anxious to acquaint his son, Ahmad, with the affairs of his estate, and desired that he should regain the lost worldly glory of the family. Ahmad had no such interest, and his leanings were all in the opposite direction: 'not to become the richest in means, but in spirit; not the greatest in worldly position, but in true honour; not the most intellectual, but the most virtuous; not the most powerful and influential, but the most truthful, upright, and honest.' Yet he thought it his duty to carry out his father's wishes. Men inspired by high principles are often required to sacrifice all that they esteem and love rather than fail in their duty. None recognised more cheerfully than Ahmad the duty of obedience and willing service. Hence, much against his own nature, he occupied himself for a considerable time in pushing on the legal proceedings that his father had started in the courts for the regaining of the ancestral estate. In sheer obedience to his father, he had also to attend to agricultural affairs. But he was not born that way, and could not always please.

A Commissioner was once coming to Qadian and Ahmad was desired by his father to go out a distance of 3 or 4 miles to receive the high official, as people generally did in the country. But the idea was repugnant to the nature of Ahmad. He was civil but not servile. He might have gone out because of filial loyalty, but he happened to be indisposed at the time and could not do so. His father was, therefore, displeased with him, although he knew perfectly well that his son was obedient and above all pious and righteous. Indeed, he would sometimes say that the manner in which Ahmad was leading his life was the best and only way, but that worldly considerations made him anxious for his son's future.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

As a matter of fact Mirza Ghulam Murtaza was very much disappointed in this respect. He looked upon Ahmad as a stranger in the family, a night guest who merely shared his table. He did not think that Ahmad could manage affairs like his or have any dealings with men of this world. This often led him to express himself even in harsh and bitter words. He earnestly desired that Ahmad should strive to better his worldly fortune. But God had designed other eminence for him. His mind felt more and more inclined to God. Indeed, he preferred to be left in the corner of solitude. He found all his pleasure in seclusion and in the want of renown. He coveted neither worldly nor religious fame and desired to lead the life of a common mortal. He yearned after spiritual advancement and communion with God.

He says in one of his Arabic works :—

"I have a Friend and I am filled with His love.
And I have an aversion to all rank and dignity.
I see that the world and its votaries are stricken with famine,
But that the land of my Love never suffers from want.

Men incline towards worldly pleasures while I
Incline towards the Face which gives delight and thrill.

I am attached to the shining skirt of my Beloved
So much so that what was dull and dark has been illumined in me.

....
....
....

I have sworn that I will not part from Him,
Even though lions should tear my body, or the wolves.
The kingdoms of men depart with their death,
But the kingdom of my Love is not to part for aye."

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

In the performance of his filial duty Ahmad had to undertake arduous journeys. The officials held their courts in Dalhousie and Lahore. The latter town is situated at a distance of about 70 miles from Qadian. The former is a hill station at a distance of about 100 miles and is about 8,000 ft. above the sea level. There plied in those days no motor cars; horse driven ekkas were also few. Therefore Ahmad had sometimes to go to Dalhousie on foot, which means that he had to put up with a good deal of inconvenience and discomfort. There was, however, one redeeming feature of these journeys. Not only did Ahmad come in contact with the outside world, but the majestic mountain scenery with its beautiful verdure and running water also filled his holy heart with the infinite beauty and glory of God. He loved the solitude of the mountains, and felt that there he was nearer to the Creator.

There was, however, a long series of cases with which Ahmad had to deal. In litigation people do not generally care much for truth, honesty, and righteousness. But in carrying out his father's wishes by faithfully conducting the legal proceedings, Ahmad never lost sight of his duty to God, whom he loved with all his heart and all his soul. If he had had his own choice in the matter he would have given up all claim to his worldly possessions and would have devoted himself, even in those days, solely to the service of God. It was, however, the Divine will that he should come in actual touch with the people of this world, and gain an experience which was to stand him in good stead ever afterwards. He saw, with his own eyes, the greed, the conceit, the lust, the wickedness and the misery of this world, which he was one day to reform and regenerate. The more he saw of this world the more thoroughly was he disgusted with its state of affairs. He never failed, therefore, to perform his sincerest and truest devotions to God. However tired and busy he might be, he would never miss having communion with God at the time of prayer.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

In an Indian Court, parties to a suit have often to wait a long time outside the Court before the judge summons them to his presence through a crier, who shouts out the names of the parties. No definite time of the day is fixed for hearing. Many a time, therefore, it happened that Ahmad was busy offering his prayers at the appointed time when the Court would summon him to its presence; and on several occasions the proceedings would begin and end in his favour before he could make his presence in the Court.

Ahmad once went to Lahore in connection with an important law suit, and stayed there with Sayyad Mohammad Ali Shah, a resident of Qadian, who in those days lived at Lahore and worked in the Forest Department. A servant of the host used to bring food to Ahmad in the Chief Court, where he had to remain in connection with the law suit. One day he returned the food with the servant, saying that he would have it at home. After a while Ahmad arrived with a cheerful countenance and appeared to be in very good spirits. But when he was asked as to whether he had won the case, he replied that he had lost.

People are generally grieved and shocked when they lose an important case. It was really a bitter disappointment to his father and a great misfortune to the family. Grief and sorrow do not, however, make any difference and prove, therefore, of no avail. Ahmad was happy in so far as he had done his duty to his father to the best of his ability, and more so because, he said, he would now have more time at his disposal to devote to the service of God.

Ahmad was once led by a cousin of his, and left Qadian with Sayyad Mohammad Ali Shah and reached Jammu *via* Kalanour. But he was so engrossed in his religious studies and devotions that he seemed to be too busy for anything else. After a few days, therefore, he returned to Qadian with a relation of his who went after them and brought them back.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Mirza Ghulam Murtaza then thought of securing a government service for his son, and in 1864 got him appointed as a reader at a Court in Sialkot. Though Ahmad did not like the service, yet it was necessary that it should be so. "To be worth anything, character must be capable of standing firm upon its feet in the world of daily work, temptation, and trial; and able to bear the wear-and-tear of actual life. Cloistered virtues do not count for much. The life that rejoices in solitude may be rejoicing only in selfishness. Seclusion may indicate contempt for others; though more usually it means indolence, cowardice, or self-indulgence. To every human being belongs his fair share of manly toil and human duty; and it cannot be shirked without loss to the individual himself, as well as to the Community to which he belongs. It is only by mixing in the daily life of the world, and taking part in its affairs, that practical knowledge can be acquired, and wisdom learnt. It is there that we find our chief sphere of duty, that we learn the discipline of work, and that we educate ourselves in that patience, diligence, and endurance which shape and consolidate the character. There we encounter the difficulties, trials, and temptations, which, according as we deal with them, give a colour to our entire after-life; and there, too, we become subject to the great discipline of suffering, from which we learn far more than from the safe seclusion of the study or the cloister. Contact with others is also requisite to enable a man to know himself."

Whatever views may be held on this, Ahmad worked there for several years to the entire satisfaction of everybody concerned.

An Arab, named Mohammad Salih, once came to Sialkot and the authorities suspected him of being a spy. The District Magistrate summoned him for an interview, but he did not know any other language except Arabic. Ahmad was, therefore, called to be the interpreter—a duty which he performed most satisfactorily.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Evening classes were started at Sialkot in those days, so that the clerks and readers of the Court might have an opportunity of learning the rudiments of English; and it is said that Ahmad also joined these classes and read one or two primers, which enabled him to recognise only the letters of the alphabet and read a few simple words. But as he discontinued his studies, it appears he soon forgot most of what he had learnt.

At Silakot, Ahmad came in touch with Christian Missionaries. He held several debates with them. Elisha, a native Christian Missionary, who lived to the south of Hajipura, once had a discussion with Ahmad. He asserted that salvation was impossible outside the fold of Christianity. Ahmad asked him to define the word "Salvation," and to explain what he meant by it. The Missionary failed to do so and concluded by saying that he had not read such logic.

The Rev. Butler, M.A., was a very learned Christian Missionary, and he had an argument with Ahmad on several occasions. This missionary used to live near the village of Gohadpur. Once he asserted that Jesus was born of a virgin so that he might inherit no sin from Adam. Ahmad pointed out that Mary had already inherited the sin, if there was any, and, moreover, that as it was Eve who caused Adam's expulsion from Paradise, Jesus should have been born without a mother also in order to be sinless according to Christian beliefs. The Missionary could not say anything in reply.

The Rev. Butler liked Ahmad very much and always spoke to him with courtesy and respect. Before coming home he specially went to the Sialkot Court to see Ahmad, who was sitting there on a mat on the floor like the rest of his fellow workers. He also seated himself and having talked with Ahmad he said good-bye to him.

Mirza Murad Beg of Jullundur, whose poetic

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

name was Mawahhad, told Ahmad that Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan of Aligarh had written a Commentary on the Bible and that if he wrote to him it would be most useful. Ahmad, thereupon, wrote to Sir Sayyad in Arabic. He also read a part of his Commentary on the Holy Quran, but he did not like it. It appeared to him that Sir Sayyad had adopted an apologetic attitude, as if there were anything in Islam that could not stand its own in the face of modern knowledge and science.

Of his friends and acquaintances at Sialkot, mention may be made of the following: Sheikh Aladad, a munshi of the Court; Sh. Fazal Din, shopkeeper; maulvi Mahbub Alam, a pious mystic of Naqshbandi School; Nasrulla, Headmaster of Mission School; Hakeem Mansab Ali, a local petition writer; and Hakeem Husam-ud-Din, a local pysician. The last-named gentleman read one or two books under Ahmad. He became one of his devoted followers later. Ahmad was friendly with L. Bhim Sain, a pleader, whom he had often met at Batala. He was an enlightened person, well versed in Persian, and, therefore, there was also an affinity between the two.

Seeing the helpless and pitiable state of the vast number of uneducated people, who could not defend their rights in Courts, Ahmad thought of helping and serving them by becoming a lawyer, which was also the wish of his father. He, therefore, once read some books on law and appeared in the Mukhtar examination, but he did not succeed*. His friend, L. Bhim Sain, was the only candidate who came out successful in the examination, concerning which Ahmad had seen a vision, which was fulfilled. Meanwhile, he went deeper into the question of legal work, realised the various defects and unworthy aspects of the job of a lawyer, and gave up the idea. He was destined to do

*There are two reports on this point: one is to the effect that he studied the course but changed his mind and did not sit for the examination; while the other report says that he sat for the examination but did not succeed. Scholars engaged in research on the material have not yet formed any final opinion.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
something far better.

The Punjab University, which had been recently constituted, needed the services of a professor of Arabic, and Maulvi Sayad Mir Hasan suggested to Ahmad that he should apply for it, but Ahmad did not like being a teacher in a worldly institution, as he felt that God had ordained him for a far higher appointment in life.

Ahmad had inherited the traditional sense of self-respect and independence which characterised the family. The superintendent of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, where Ahmad worked, was Pandit Sahj Ram, and he was a bitter enemy of Islam. He used to argue with Ahmad and he always laboured under the misconception that because he held a superior position in the office he should have the upper hand in his religious argument. But there was nothing to deter Ahmad from defending the truth. He would always expose the untruth with due deference to the Pandit, who did not like Ahmad's attitude, and, therefore, often resorted to mean pin-pricks in official matters. Ahmad, however, did his duty most conscientiously, and never cared for the rest.

There is an interesting anecdote related of Ahmad when he was at Sialkot. One day when the offices had closed and everybody was going home, a few friends began to talk of running. Each one claimed that he was a fast runner. Balla Singh said he could beat all of them and challenged all. Ahmad thought that despatch was better than discourse, so he accepted the challenge and the race began. Sh. Alladad was appointed as referee, another referee was sent to the bridge on the way at the other end. Ahmad beat Balla Singh. Better far the silent tongue and the eloquent deed.

While Ahmad was at Sialkot, he used to entertain the poor and look after them, and as a result of this, whatever he earned it did not cover all his

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

expenses. His father used, therefore, to send him regular extra amounts. Once his mother sent him four suits of clothes through Hayat, a local barber. Barbers in India used to go on such errands in those days. Ahmad gave one of these suits to Hayat who was very pleased at the generous gift. This same fellow asked Ahmad how he was getting on with his service in Sialkot. Ahmad replied it was no better than a jail for him. In another place he says that he lived there "alone in company and single in a crowd." He lived in the town as if it were a jungle. He was in this world but not of it. Once people became curious as to why Ahmad shut himself in a room every day. They were, however, profoundly impressed when they discovered him sitting on his prayer carpet with the Holy Quran in his hand, imploring God to grant him understanding of it.

He had rented a house* belonging to Omra Kashmiri, in the Mohalla where Maulvi Abdul Karim was born. He was always most usefully occupied and never wasted a moment of his life. Sometimes illiterate people came to see him on business after office hours; and he had to request the elder brother of his landlord, who was an influential man, to make them understand that he could do no more for them, and that they should leave him alone. He wanted to be undisturbed, because it is in solitude that the passion for spiritual perfection best nurses itself. The soul communes with God in loneliness. In a small-natured man solitude only serves to make the hard heart still harder; but it is the nurse of great spirits, and in a large-natured man, solitude makes the pure heart purer. So Ahmad spent his spare time in meditation and prayers.

Mirza Ghulam Murtaza missed Ahmad and ordered him to return to Qadian. Ahmad was already sick of service, so he tendered his immediate resignation and came home in 1868. Another reason for his

*Later on he shifted to another house in front of the Cathedral Mosque.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
recall was the serious illness and death of his mother. She passed away before his arrival.

At Qadian, Ahmad had to look after the affairs of the estate as he had done before. But the day was approaching when he was to be chosen to superintend affairs of a different nature altogether. Though its approach had been heralded by a vision four or five years before, yet a little incident that happened in 1868 or 1869 is most interesting and instructive. Muhammad Husain of Batala came to his native town having newly qualified himself as a Maulvi. As he belonged to the Ahli Hadith sect his views were not liked by his fellow-citizens. So a man came to Ahmad and persuaded him almost forcibly to hold a debate with Mohammad Husain. Ahmad went to Batala in the evening and found Mohammad Husain and his father in a mosque. He opened the debate by a speech. But Ahmad could not see anything in it to which he could take objection. Accordingly, he declared that there was nothing in the speech that needed any refutation. The party who had brought him was naturally upset and felt very much ashamed. So he became an object of ridicule to both parties.

But such was Ahmad's love of truth and honesty that he did not care for anything that his friends or foes might say. He would rather suffer for speaking the truth, than that the truth should suffer for want of his speaking. He looked on things as they were in themselves, not through the dim spectacles of vulgar estimation. He suffered every humility and indignity with a cheerful countenance. It is not every debater that can behave in like manner. People generally seek after popular applause. It is only a man of sterling character who has the courage to speak the truth, even when it is unpopular. So God was immensely pleased with Ahmad. The strength of character that he showed in such circumstances was really a great credit to him. In the night, therefore, when he was alone with God, He said that He was pleased at his action and He would bless him, so much so that

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Kings would seek blessings from his clothes.

Sharampat Rai, an Arya of Qadian, used to discuss religious matters with Ahmad and refused to believe in the prophecies made by the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace he on him). In 1868 his brother Bashambar Das was sent to jail for some offence along with Khush Hal. An appeal on their behalf was pending in the Chief Court of the Punjab. Sharampat Rai came to Ahmad and made a request for prayers, and remarked that, if it were possible to foretell the future, he should like to know beforehand the final decision of the Chief Court in the case. He insisted upon it with a view to testing the truth of Islam. Ahmad, thereupon, prayed to God, in answer to which he was told that the case would be reversed to the lower court, where the term of his brother's imprisonment would be reduced by half, while Khush Hal, the other Hindu, would have to serve the full term. At the news of the reversal of the case to the lower court, it was given out in the night by Dhanpat, their relative at Qadian, that the accused were acquitted and that they had already reached home. Ahmad was worried on account of the bad effect it might produce on the people regarding Islam. He, however, received a revelation that the news of their acquittal was false. The truth was out the next morning, and people marvelled at the wonderful manner in which God informed Ahmad beforehand of what was to happen.

About 1868, Mirza Ghulam Qadir became seriously ill. Though Ahmad had seen a dream which meant that his brother would die, yet he prayed to God for his recovery. His prayer was accepted and it was revealed to him that his brother would recover, and so he did.

Ahmad devoted most of his time to study and the books that he studied most were the Holy Quran, *Bukhari*, *Masnavi Roomi* and *Dalailul Khairat*. He had always a pile of books round him when he was at

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

home; and he went out for walks to the north or the east side of Qadian.

He once put his foot on a stool, which tipped over, and caused his right arm to be fractured. The arm remained weak until the end of his life. He could not lift anything heavy; and even in prayers, while holding his hands on the chest he had to support his right arm with his left. It is said that the hair of Ahmad began to turn grey when he reached the age of thirty, and that at fifty he had an entirely hoary head.

Ahmad once had an attack of tuberculosis, and suffered from it for six months. His uncle, Mirza Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din*, nearly despaired of his life. But thanks to the loving attention of his father, who treated him as physician, he was completely cured.

The simplicity of his life was striking. He dressed in a plain fashion, and ate whatever he was given. Plain living and high thinking was his motto throughout life. For his honesty, fairness and righteousness, he was held in high esteem, not only by members of his own family but also by his enemies. They would often appoint him the arbitrator in their disputes, and then abide by his decisions.

He was once appointed as a Commissioner in a Marriage Suit. He went to the place to make enquiries and was accompanied by an official peon, Miran Bakhsh by name. Officials generally think that they possess a right to demand, in villages, on such occasions, hospitality not only for their own selves but also for their servants and horses. But Ahmad was very careful in such matters. He took with him not only his own food, but also fodder for his horse, which he was supposed to ride. He did not, however, like to ride the horse himself. On such occasions, contrary to the selfish arrogance of

* Father of Imam Din, Nizam Din and Kamal Din. He was a Tahsildar.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

the snob, he would always think of his companion first.

According to his practice, he asked the attendant to ride while he traversed the distance on foot. He ordered him, however, not to accept any gift from the parties. In the first instance, he displayed a love-provoking consideration too rare in the so-called civilised countries of the West; and in the second, he set an example to all civil leaders, that they should be free from every form of corruption and extortion and thus not betray the trust placed in them.

Nothing seemed to upset him. He was always cheerful. There was a beam in his eye—a beam of spiritual cheerfulness. This beam shed brightness, beauty, and joy upon life in all its phases. It shone upon coldness, and warmed it; upon suffering, and comforted it; upon ignorance, and enlightened it; upon sorrow, and cheered it. He was, however, indignant at falsehood, selfishness, and cruelty. One who loves right cannot be indifferent to wrong or wrong doing. There was one thing that he could not bear—an indignity heaped upon his Master, the Holy Prophet Mohammad (may peace and the blessings of God he upon him). Not that he would make an unseemly scene in public, but would simply leave the place and the people who had not the sense to respect the greatest benefactor of mankind.

The Indian press was not very powerful. Ahmad subscribed to the following local papers and read them regularly:—*Safeer of Amritsar*; *Agni Hotri's Magazine*; *Hindu Bandu*, and *Manshoor Mohammadi*: To the last named journal he sometimes sent articles. In the latter years of his life he read the *Akhbar Am* of Lahore.

Once Ahmad was offered a very responsible and lucrative post in Kapurthala State, in charge of its education department. But he did not accept it. When his father asked him about it, he said that he did not wish to entangle himself in worldly affairs, and that all he needed from him was a pair of

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Khaddar clothes to wear and a little bread to eat. His father was very much touched by this reply and said to an acquaintance, Ghulam Nabi, that anxious though he was for Ahmad as a father, yet he felt that Ahmad was right in leading such a righteous and simple life.

Ahmad was once appointed an 'assessor' (a jury-man) at the Sessions Court, but he did not accept. Jhanda Singh of Kahlawan, a village near Qadian, says that through him Ahmad was once called to his father's presence. His father wanted Ahmad's consent to get him an appointment. Ahmad replied that he had already got one, meaning thereby that he had entered the service of God and would not like to do anything else.

"As an expression of imaginative feeling, as the movement of an energy, as one of those great human forces which go to the development of the race, poetry in the wide sense has played as important a part as science." Hence the sincerity, the conscience, and the spiritual pathos of Ahmad found expression in poetry. The divine spirit which surged within his bosom burst out in rhythm—not so much of art as that which art would fain catch, the rhythm of nature, of life itself. He did not write for profit, nor for pleasure and amusement. The world did not know until years afterwards that he used to write poems in Urdu and Persian. He shunned publicity. His passages of pathos drew no tears so deep or so sweet as those that fell from his own eyes while he wrote them. The Persian poems that he wrote in those days were published only after his death. The work is known as *Durri Maknoon*. I cannot stop here to discuss the merits of his poems, which I hope to speak of later in a separate chapter. What I wish to record here is the fact that he wrote poetry in those days, and that his 'takhallus' was Farrukh.

To give an idea of his feelings and thoughts, I give a rough rendering of a letter that he wrote in

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Persian. It is addressed to his father; but as it is not signed and dated, there is no proof of the fact that it was actually delivered to him. This does not, however, detract in any way from the value of its contents :—

"My revered father—May you live long and in peace. I want to say that all around me I see, in towns and countries, an epidemic that appears to separate friends from friends, and relations from relations. Not a year passes but that a calamity inflicts suffering on the world. In view of this, my heart has grown cold towards all around me, and I have turned pale out of fear. I often read the following verse of Shaikh Musleh-ud-Din Sadi Sherazi, and shed tears of regret and grief :—

مکن تکیہ بر عمر ناپائدار مباش ایمن از بازی روزگار

Also the following verse from the Work of Farrukh Qadiani saddens my heart :

بدنیاے دوں دل مبند اے جواں کہ وقت اجل میرسد ناگہان

"Hence I wish I could spend the rest of my days in some solitary corner, drawing myself away from the company of men and busying myself with the remembrance of God. Perchance I may succeed in making up for lost time, and may be able to make amends for all my past :—

عمر بگذشت و نماند است جز از گامے چند
بہ کہ در یار کسے صبح کنم شامے چند

"There is no stability in this world. All life is transient."

Islam does not permit monasticism or asceticism. But it does prescribe fasting as a means of the attainment of spiritual eminence. A short time before his father's death, Ahmad was in a dream advised by an old angelic man to keep certain fasts in accordance with the usage of the Prophets of God to enable him to receive the Divine blessings: so he resolved to observe fasts secretly. He managed to have his lunch

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
brought to him in his sitting room, where by previous arrangement he would secretly invite some poor children and orphans and would distribute all his food, amongst them. After two or three weeks he decided gradually to reduce his food, and managed subsequently to live on a little piece of bread which he took only once in 24 hours. In this manner he fasted for 8 or 9 successive months. This opened up to him the spiritual kingdom. He saw wonderful visions and met a number of the Prophets and saints gone before; and had experiences which perhaps none but the elect could understand.

In his opinion, however, it is not advisable for ordinary people to impose upon themselves such hardships, for some lose their senses and others contract fatal diseases as a result of their self-imposed privations.

As a rule Ahmad did not like to seek the company of men; but if he ever heard of any holy man, he would go and see him with pleasure. Maulvi Abdulla of Ghazni (Afghanistan) was an eminent personage. He was persecuted in his native country by fanatics; and having been declared an infidel, he was expelled from Ghazni. He used to live in the neighbourhood of Amritsar. Ahmad used to visit this holy man and always took some present for him when he went to see him. The object for which Ahmad saw him was not that of any personal profit or fancy, but to request him to pray for the welfare of Islam.

Similarly, there was another holy man named Sharaf Din. He lived at Sam, near Talabpur, in the Gurdaspur district, and Ahmad visited him also for the same purpose.

In 1874 Ahmad saw in a dream a most beautiful young boy of about 7 years. In his dream Ahmad looked upon him as an angel. He was sitting on a raised platform, which was perhaps covered also. The boy gave Ahmad a most delicious and luminous *Nan* (a kind of loaf). It was four times the ordinary

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
size. While handing it to Ahmad, he said,

"Take this; it is for you and for the dervishes who are with you." This is a most significant dream, and may be regarded as a symbol of the bread of life. As before, Ahmad shared his food with others. He continued to do so ever afterwards and soon this idea developed into an ever expanding institution, which Ahmad established at Qadian for the hospitality and the entertainment of all those who came to him. It was indeed the fulfilment of the Lord's prayer: 'Give us this day our daily bread' It is, in fact, the physical representation of the Kingdom of God on earth, so that His will be done in earth as it is in heaven. It was to deliver mankind from evil that the *Langar Khana* was later established by Ahmad under the Divine command. To my mind, it was in a way the fulfilment of Jesus's prayer, mentioned in the Holy Quran:

'O God our Lord, cause a table to descend unto us from heaven, that the day of its descent may become a festival day unto us, unto the first of us, and unto the last of us, and a sign from Thee; and do Thou provide food for us, for Thou art the best provider."

Ahmad was in Lahore in June 1875 when he had a dream from which he concluded that the time of the death of his father had approached. So he hastened to Qadian and found that although he did not look ill he was suffering from dysentery (زحیر).

The next day members of the family were all in attendance upon him, as was the custom of the country. It was a very hot day, and Ahmad was told by his father that as he had been waiting upon him for some time he should retire for a little while and have a rest. Ahmad withdrew to his room upstairs. There was nothing particularly serious about his father's illness. But while he was reclining it was revealed to him by God in Arabic that his father would die after sunset the same day. The news was naturally of a painful

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

nature and made him sad. The thought, too, passed through his mind as to how, after his father was gone, he was to find a living. Upon this there came another revelation in which God consoled him and fully allayed his fears. The event will be best described in the words of the Promised Messiah himself. He writes: "When I was informed that my father was to die after sunset, the news caused me the pang of grief instinctive to humanity, and since some of the important sources of our family incomes were bound up with his hife,—*e.g.*, the pension and the good service annuity he received from the British Government—the thought passed through my mind as to what was to happen after his death, and there came a flutter in my heart that perhaps there would now come days of poverty and pain. All these thoughts passed through my mind in a moment, like a flash of lightening. Immediately there came over me a trance and the second revelation came اليس الله بكاف عبده "Is not God all-sufficient for His servant?" The Divine revelation was immediately followed by a feeling of mental relief, as though some painful wound had been suddenly healed by a potent ointment.....When the relevation came, I understood that God would not allow me to perish. I then wrote down the revelation and made it over to a certain Hindu Khatri, Malawamul by name, who is a resident of Qadian, and is still living. I also told him the whole story and sent him to Amritsar so that with the help of Hakim Maulvi Muhammad Shareef of Kalanaur he might get the revelation inscribed on a stone and have a seal made of it. I selected the Hindu for the work simply to make him as well as Maulvi Muhammad Shareef witnesses of this grand prophecy. In due time Maulvi Muhammad Shareef got the signet made for only Rs. 5, and forwarded it to me, and it remains with me still."

Ahmad's father passed away after sunset, in accordance with his son's revelation, and Mirza Ghulam Qadir, the elder brother of Ahmad, became the head of the family.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN THE MUSLIM WORLD TO-DAY

Out of movements in the religious world of Islam at the present day only one is deep rooted and really well organized—the Ahmadiyya Movement. The rest, really speaking, do not deserve to be called movements as they represent only haphazard, disjointed, fragmentary tendencies in the thought of scattered individuals.

These tendencies, diverse and multifarious though they are, can yet be described in one sentence. They are directly traceable to a deplorable lack of real faith in the truth of Islam as a religion—in the existence of God, as a matter of fact. This drift is most noticeable among the so-called "enlightened" men, educated more or less on Western lines. The materialistic view of life having penetrated deep into the core of their being, they stand in great awe of the "progress" achieved by the white man, with the result that (unconsciously, perhaps, in many cases) they begin to measure things according to standards with which a European or an American is accustomed to measure them. The religious impulse withers away into lifelessness as soon as the moving spring is taken out of it —the belief and conviction that there is a God. With this conviction gone, a modern educated Muslim is apt to look upon attendance at the mosque five times a day for prayers as rather silly and old fashioned. To have to perform *wuzu* is sillier still. And as for observing the month of fasting, well, he would beg your pardon for saying so but it is really the height of absurdity to think that God is pleased if a man starves himself day after day for one month. "Look at the Europeans! how thoroughly they have cast off such childish notions. They hardly go to church once in a way ; many people never go there as long as they live. They go to the cinema instead; or, if they have the money, they go to

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
the theatre or the opera. That is recreation any way. But what on earth can be the use of going to the mosque and posturing there in a ridiculous manner—now standing, now bowing, now prostrating, and repeating the procedure until all the bones in one's body begin to ache. If you want exercise, then go to a gymnasium ; or, better still, have a pair of Sandow's grip dumbells or a set of chest expanders in your own room. Or go for a walk, play cricket—do anything sane and healthy. But what is the point in going to a mosque ?"

The thougts of Muslims "touched" by the Western fever run somewhat along these lines. Such men understand culture—that is European culture ; they understand philosophy—that is European philosophy ; they understand art—that is European art : they know everything ; they are really educated modern men. The only trouble is they do not understand their own culture ; they are not aware of the truths bequeathed to them by their own fathers ; they have lost the art of living their own lives—they have lost their own individuality. They can only ape and struct along on the stage. Ignorant of the wisdom which lies in Islam, they cannot defend that religion from attack. Therefore they seek safety in flight. Islam, they say, was of course all right thirteen centuries ago, but now the world has changed. How can a system, designed to meet the needs of long ago, fit into modern conditions ?

Certain points in the teachings of Islam have specially been subjected to attack by European influences and it is exactly on these points that the above type of man is particulary shaky. Outward acts of worship like *salat*, fasting, etc. ; the injunctions with regard to lawful and forbidden foods ; aspects of the teaching of Islam bearing on the position of woman in society, like polygamy and partial segregation of the sexes ; and teachings with regard to interest—these are the questions with regard to which the above type of man desires in his heart to bring about a change.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

But due to the very circumstances of his education and up-bringing, he is out of contact with the vast body of life of the general Muslim people. His thougts find no echo in the masses, and therefore he seldom dares to speak them out openly.

The masses in their place are dominated by the old type of *Mulia*, or *Maulvi*, or *Imam*—words which denote, in various localities and countries, the same thing—a man supposed to be well read in theology and therefore a religious leader in his circle. These men, unfortunately, cling desperately to the outer shell of their religion while the spirit and the reality inside has been lost to their sight. The result is that they cannot explain the reasons, the beauties, which form the basis of Islamic teachings ; and they insist all the more vehemently on the observance of a ritual and practice which they cannot explain.

This, in a nutshell, is the general state of affairs prevaling in the Muslim world to-day.

These tendencies are most clearly visible in Muslim countries in the Near and Middle East—Turkey, Egypt, etc. ; but they are to be met with, more or less, everywhere.

The " Modern Muslim " has despaired of success in " reforming " Islam. As a matter of fact he is not very keen on Islam, either reformed or unreformed. He is keen on quite other things, and he very much wishes to heaven his people would forget all about religion and devote their time and energy to things which really matter. But love of Islam lies so deep in the blood of the masses that he realises well enough there is no possibility of such a thing ever happening. So he is altogether in despair, not knowing what to do. The decay and the rot and general decline goes on space meanwhile.

With regard to the confused mental outlook that has come to be characteristic of the " Modern Muslim "

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
we, in fairness and justice, can scarcely hold him to blame. Education developes intellect if it does nothing else. With the intellectual faculties quickened to life, man cannot help asking the why and wherefore of things. After taking his diploma in London or Berlin and returning home, if the "Modern Muslim" started asking why he should go to the mosque, or why he should fast, or why was interest a bad institution, it was no fault of his : it was only natural for him to ask these and many similar questions. The trouble has been that those doctors of religion whose duty it was to satisfy such inquiries were found wanting and failed altogether in their task. And they still continue to fail.

So much for the "Modern Muslim". He is anchorless, and he is in despair, though he is honest to a degree and has good intentions.

Now let us take the common man and the Mulla, or Imam, or Maulvi to whom he looks for guidance and instruction. The terrible decay that has overtaken the Muslim world, has eaten into the very marrow of its bones. Placed in these circumstances, how does the common man feel? What does he think? How does the Mulla, the Imam or the Maulvi feel?

The Mulla and his follower shut their eyes to the decay for a long time ; they were not disposed to admit there was any decay: they preferred to live in a fool's paradise, thinking that everything was as it should be. But moral degeneration, as soon as it lays firm hold upon a people, is quick to show itself through shattered political power. Turkey, for a long time the champion of Islam, became the sick man of Europe. Out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire there grew up a number of Balkan States till at last the Turk has practically been pushed off the European continent. The Asiatic and African countries of the Turkish Empire fell under the direct or indirect control of Britain, France and Italy. Persia became like a fat and tender lamb with the talons of two Imperial Eagles buried deep in its back. In India the 70 million

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Muslims became relegated to the position of a backward minority. The destinies of the Muslims in the East Indies, too, passed into the control of alien races.

When matters came to such a pass, the Mulla and his followers were forced to open their eyes, so that the whole Muslim world now keenly realises that something has gone amiss. But no-body really seems to know where exactly the trouble lies, nor how to put matters right. The modern educated man puts the blame on the excessively religious outlook of the people in general—the inertia born of too much other worldliness, prevailing notions about Fate (*kismet*), widespread ignorance, and lack of scientific and industrial training. There is a good deal of truth in this diagnosis, but the way he proposes to deal with the trouble is all wrong. He wishes to take religion away from the people—a thing which the people would never tolerate. And religion itself, really, is not at fault. History bears ample testimony to the fact that there is nothing in Islam that could be held to be incompatible with progress. As long as the Muslims remained good Muslims, they were a progressive people. They excelled in both the arts of peace as well as of war. For centuries they were the torch-bearers of science and learning of all kinds—medicine, engineering, astronomy, mathematics, architecture, etc.

The fault really lies in the mistaken views—and ignorance in many respects—with regard to the teachings of their religion and with regard to the place and scope of religion. And this is a fault which the modern educated man can not put right simply because he himself knows little about religion of any kind, and least of all does he know about the religion which came to him from his fathers.

We have said that it is not religion that is at fault but a wide-spread mistaken conception of religion. What we mean by this we will try to illustrate by giving a concrete instance. When the Western type of education was introduced in India, the Mullas (they

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

are called *Maulvis* or *Ulama* in India) issued a religious decree that all who would go in for this type of education, would, by doing so, become *kafirs* or infidels. The reason why the *Ulama* issued this decree was that they were themselves in mortal terror, aware of their inability to maintain, under changed conditions brought about by a liberal education, the leadership they had enjoyed for centuries. With their position unchallenged for a long time, they had been neglecting the duties and responsibilities which went with that position: they had shamefully neglected to cultivate a real and deep understanding of the religion of which they were the custodians. Instead of feeding the people on religion, they had taken to feeding them on superstition and lies. Instinctively conscious of their great failing, conscious of the fraud they were practising upon the people, therefore, they knew as though by instinct that new ideas learnt in school by eager young students would make them ask questions with regard to those ridiculous notions they had put into their minds as constituting Islam. This situation the *Ulama* knew they were not in a position to face; so they decided to keep the disturbing factors away from the people: they issued the decree referred to above. Such was the force of religious decrees of the *Ulama* (they are called *Fatwas*) some time ago that the people, generally speaking, obeyed for a good bit of time. In spirit the decree has some influence even now.

This is what happened in India, but it is more or less typical of what happened all over the Muslim world.

Now let us take another instance. Political power is the result of certain moral qualities. As soon as these qualities became engrained in the character of a nation, that nation becomes strong, independent and free. Conversely, when these traits of character disappear from the psychology of a nation, however collossal in strength and prestige, it soon goes to wrack and ruin.

Keeping this truth in view, when we look at the

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

universal decay that has come over the Muslim world, there is only one conclusion to draw—that those qualities which are a necessary pre-requisite of power have totally disappeared from the Muslim character. And as soon as we recognise this fact we can at once discern the lines along which the task of regeneration should proceed if it is to be of any permanent value. Regeneration, as a matter of fact, is the crying need of the Muslim world to-day—regeneration that is deep and thorough. But the Mulla and his followers, here again, are proving a stumbling block in the way.

Fact is that the Mulla and his follower are both too dense, two self-complascent, too ignorant and stubborn to realise or admit that any regeneration, along lines indicated above, is necessary at all. They are convinced that the decay is only a temporary phase; they think it will be over soon, without their moving hand or foot to arrest it or to avert it. In any case they are dead sure that when the *Mehdi* and the *Promised Messiah* make their appearance, they would restore Islam to its former glory. They would be irresistible: they would have Divine Succour at their back; they would combine their forces; they would wage a Holy War against the whole world; they would take the Holy Quran in one hand and the sword in the other: to every one they would give only one choice —either to accept Islam or to be put to the sword. All nations then would embrace Islam, and those that will not do so, would be wiped out. With endless resources at his disposal, the *Masih* would invite each and every Muslim to take away as much wealth as he may be able to carry. The Muslims, thus, would become so enormously rich that wealth, so to say, would literally go begging for a master but there would be no one to a ccept it.

This what we have said just now with regard to the *Mehdi* and the *Promised Messiah* has been said in sober truth: there is no exaggeration in it. The masses and the *Mullas*, the *Maulvis*, the *Imams*, the *Ulama*—

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

all are looking forward to the advent of just such a Mehdi and just such a Promised Messiah. They have put all their hopes in them; and having done so, they are content to leave things as they are and to wait.

With regard to the appearance of the *Mehdi* and the Messiah the hopes of the Muslims are well-founded; but, as happened in the case of the Jews, the popular conception of the Messianic mission has assumed a form so fundamentally different to the reality spoken of in the scriptures that even though the signs mentioned in the Hadith and the Quran as indicative of the time of his appearance have all been witnessed, and even though the expected teacher came at the proper time and passed away, the Muslims continue to watch the horizon in a vain hope.

Thus the intelligentsia among the Muslims think; but their mind is concentrated upon secular progress which they perceive is being hindered by the attitude of the masses towards religion. The reaction of this circumstance upon their mind is not altogether favourable to Islam. The masses and the Mullas, on the other hand do not think at all – they only wait. The one live movement in the Muslim world to-day is the Ahmadiyya movement which represents the revival of Islam in its pristine purity as brought about by the *Promised Messiah* and *Mehdi* whom the world does not yet recognise, *but soon will.*

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

REVIEWS

"Golden Deeds of Muslim Youth": (in Urdu) *by Rahmat-ullah Khan Shakir, published by Ahmadiyya Bookstall, Qadian. Annas 8.*

It is an incontestible fact that the history of Islam is not a mere matter-of-fact account of an insignificant people, but a true romance of pluck and energy and other rare human virtues which make nations great. Facts stranger than fiction and more instructive than sermons preached from the pulpit can be ganerned from every conceivable phase of Islamic history: all that is required is attentive reading and a little skill to dig out the gems from the copious records and to present them in the form of a book.

But it is deplorable that Urdu writers have not given adequate thought to this line of work, and the book under review has come in the fullness of time. Written in free, easy style, with a judicious classification of its contents, it is a valuable contribution to Urdu literature. It does not pose to be the last word on the subject; nor is it the first attempt of its kind. But its author, undoubtedly, has taken pains over it, and rendered timely service to Muslim youth of the day by bringing before their eyes a page of their history full of the inspiration of noble example of a quality not easy to find in the annals of any other race.

The quality of the paper and printing, unfortunately, leaves much to be desired, and it is to be hoped that the publishers would remove this defect when the book goes into the second edition.

MUHADMAD HUSAIN, B. COM.

"The Individual and the Group": by *B. K. Mallik, Unwin, London. 6s. net.*

We are told in the introduction that the book is the result of discussions among a group of men anxious to study the Hindu-Muslim problem, to analyse its various interpretations, and to seek some solution. Its "point is simply to try and give at least a summary of the discussion as it moved on from week to week" and "to work out some speculations" on the author's own part.

The most awkward hurdle directly in the line of India's march to freedom, the Hindu-Muslim problem, or, speaking

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

more widely, the communal question, unfortunately, is receiving but scant attention at the hands of those who should be foremost in facing this issue squarely instead of wasting valuable time and leaving the poison to work havoc in the country. Day after day, in the press, we read distressing accounts of tension increasing and violent riots, but the "Indian National Congress"– the most influential political organisation in the country—recognises no need to do anything about it. Therefore, inasmuch as it represents an endeavour to study the question, Mr. Mallik's book is to be commended: but an impartial critic is bound to say that if the author has also intended to facilitate a solution of the thorny question, his attempt is likely to prove an unqualified failure.

Mr. Mallik and, presumably, the Calcutta Club, "rather politically minded", under whose auspices the discussion embodied in the book took place, embarked on this study from the assumption that the Indian Muslim is opposing the Movement for Freedom in India. This, to say the least, is laying it on rather thick. The sweeping accusation, apart from the question of justification, lacks in tact and political acuemen surprising in a cultured man also member of a politically minded club. Mr. Mallik should have realised that he was not likely to pursuade Indian Muslims into a more reasonable frame of mind by calling them traitors. Yet this is precisely what he has done. And in handling his subject he displays himself true to type—an emotional Bengali gentleman whose feelings, in spite of his evident culture and wide and varied reading, run away with his judgment. With scorn and sarcasm he rejects the Indian Muslim's claim to understand Islam and denies to him the right to champion its cause. He is but a later convert. The real Muslims are the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Palestinians, the Syrians, the Turks and the Persians; and look how they loathe Great Britain! But the Indian Muslim is so deeply enamoured of this Siren that he follows blindly in the wake of her song. This is the soul of the argument with which Mr. Mallik seeks to win over Indian Muslims to the cause of India's freedom. It is surprising how a man of his intelligence failed to perceive that this sort of logic only hurts—it does not convince. But perhaps the book is designed not to win over Indian Muslims but to "enlighten" foreign readers—to poison their minds against Indian Muslims and to bring them into contempt. In any case, whatever the motive, that is the purpose which the book is going to serve:—

"The chief evidence which the theory brings forward

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

to maintain its claim is derived mostly from the nature of the technique which the Mohammadans follow in their onslaught on the Hindus whenever there is any serious dispute with them. And that technique, as is well-known, consists in four distinct modes of attack :—

1. Slaughter of the cow.
2. Murder of the genius or the saint among the Hindus.
3. Demolition of temples and images.
4. Abduction of Hindu women.

What happens is that, irrespective of the scale and object of dispute between the Hindu and the Mohammadan, the former is invariably exposed or subjected to a fourfold attack at the hands of the latter. A sort of offensive reminiscent of the promenade type is declared against him on all the four fronts simultaneously. It makes no difference if the occasion for the offensive arose out of a dispute over a piece of land, or a piece of classical music, or some political privilege, or even bare economic gain ; there never is any attempt on the part of the Mohammadan to localise the quarrel or to choose the form of his weapon according to the nature of the dispute."

In the interest of truth it has to be observed, however, that should any one care to study facts in regard to " murder of the genius or the saint among Hindus " he would read a distressing account of how these " saints " showed their saintly nature by heaping the most filthy abuse upon the founder of Islam and how the general Hindu public applauded this meritorious performance. If this unbearable provocation proved too strong for some passionate natures, in isolated individual cases, and they took the law into their own hands, it is quite understandable ; and even on these occasions the general Muslim public was quick to condemn the outrages. As for the abduction of women, Hindu distaste for the re-marriage of child widows goes far to explain most of the " abductions." After growing up, when a way opens out before them through which they can escape from the living death of enforced celibacy and renunciation of all natural joy, not a few succumb to the temptation and fly out of their homes as captive birds fly out of a cage, or *let* themselves be abducted. A portion of the cases may well be genuine cases of abduction involving victims other than child-widows, but then cases of the abduction of Muslim women, too, are not at all so rare. Fact of the matter therefore is that the abduction of women is a social problem ; it has no connection, except in rare isolated cases, with the Hindu-Muslim question.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

A frequent source of Hindu-Muslim frictions is the passage of Hindu processions—sometimes religious, sometimes bridal—with music playing by the side of mosques where the Muslims are engaged in devotions. On such occasions the Hindu idea of self-respect insists upon the continuance of music despite Muslim requests to the contrary, and both sides waxing hot and angry, clashes occur. This music is, in almost cent per cent. cases, just any kind of music, very often no music at all but a jumble of crude and grotesque noises. Those who have any personal knowledge of these processions know what they are like, and the music that accompanies them. Mr. Mallik, however, calls it "classical music", conjuring up thereby in the mind of his European and American readers a vision of Wagner, Mozart and Chopin, and for ever damns the Indian Muslims in the estimation of these readers for being such unspeakable barbarians as to object to classical music.

As for cow-killing, the Indian Muslim fails to understand why his use of beef should anger the Hindus, especially when he, poor man, takes good care to kill it where no Hindu is likely to see him in the act. And why should not a Hindu eat or drink from the hands of a Muslim? The result of this economic boycott is that trade and commerce have become Hindu monopolies. Is it difficult to understand in the circumstance, or unnatural on their part, if the Muslims desire to secure some promise now with regard to their future. The races inhabiting India when the Aryans entered this land were trusting and simple enough to put their future in the hands of the descendants of the Vedic Rishis; and the Muslims too might have done the same. Only, they know how thoroughly the interests of the "untouchable" have been betrayed.

And co-operation with Britain, of which Mr. Mallik accuses the Indian Muslims so vehemently, apart from the truth of the matter is, after all, not absolutely incompatible with nationalism and the desire to see India free. Anyway if it is a crime, it is one of which even the great Gandhi stands convicted. The Congress, too, in point of fact, is actually co-operating with the government, though it chooses not to admit it. Moreover, the suspicion entertained by Mr. Bose does not appear to be wholly groundless; and should the Congress finally accept Federation the cat of non-co-operation would jump clean out of the bag.

USEFUL RELIGIOUS LITERATURE

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

	Rs.	A.	P.
1. THE HOLY QURAN PART I—Translation with explanatory notes, size 20×30/8, pages 121 ...	1	0	0
2. THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM—By Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. Gives a solution of five fundamental problems of human life. An epoch-making book			
Bound, size 22×20/16, pages 191 ...	0	5	0
Unbound, size 20×30/16, pages 198 ...	0	2	0
3. THE LODE STAR—By Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah. Deals with the great reformation brought about by the Holy Prophet among the illiterate, uncultured Arabs which made them the teachers of the world in social matters, polity and ethics. Size 17×27/28, pages 84 ...	0	4	0
4. AHMADIYYAT OR THE TRUE ISLAM—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community. This book deals in a simple and lucid manner briefly but fully and completely with all the different aspects of the teachings of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. A compendium of the Quranic teachings.			
Bound, size 20×30/16, pages 433 ...	2	0	0
Unbound, pages 456 ...	0	10	0
5. THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SPLIT—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community. A survey of the causes that led to the split which occurred in the Ahmadiyya Community on the death of Hazrat Maulana Noor-ud-Din, First Successor of the Promised Messiah. Size 20×30/16, pages 376 ...	1	0	0
6. A PRESENT TO KINGS—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad. An epistle to H. E. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad dealing with the claims of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement and with the proofs and arguments that support them. Size 20×26/8, pages 90 ...	0	12	0
7. A PRESENT TO THE PRINCE OF WALES—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad. A booklet presented to the Duke of Windsor when he visited India in 1922 as the Prince of Wales. In Biblical language the book beautifully deals with the subject that the present is the time for the much-awaited Deliverer of Humanity to appear. Towards the end a passionate appeal has been made to the Prince to accept Islam.			
Bound, size 20×30/16, pages 103 ...	1	0	0
Unbound, pages 120 ...	0	5	0
8. AHMAD THE MESSENGER OF THE LATTER DAYS—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community, Qadian. A booklet on the life and character of Ahmad, the Promised Messiah.			
Bound, size 17×27/8, pages 86 ...	0	12	0
Unbound, pages 68 ...	0	3	0
9. THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad. A resume of the teachings of Ahmad with a brief history of the Ahmadiyya Movement.			
Bound, size 20×30/16, pages 100 ...	0	8	0
Unbound, size 17×27, pages 88 ...	0	4	0

10. ISLAM AND SLAVERY—By Mirza Bashir Ahmad, M.A. Rs. A. P.
A pamphlet briefly dealing with the teachings of Islam about slavery and exploding the unfounded charge that Islam perpetuates this inhuman institution, size 20×30/16, pages 90 0 5 0

11. THE HADITH—By Maulvi A. R. Dard, M.A.
A booklet on the importance of *Hadith*, and its place in Islamic theological literature, size 30×30/16, pages 112 ... 0 6 0

12. THE FAMILY OF THE FOUNDER OF THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT—Compiled by Sufi Abdul Qadir, B.A., and revised by Mirza Bashir Ahmad, M.A.
It is a brief history of the family of the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, size 23×30/16, pages 64 ... 0 5 0

13. A MESSAGE OF PEACE—By Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah.
The pamphlet contains valuable suggestions as to how peace among different Indian communities can be established on a sound basis. size 20×26/8, pages 40 ... 0 1 0

14. POLITICAL SOLIDARITY OF ISLAM—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community.
A pamphlet showing to the Indian Muslims the way how to become a united, disciplined and well-knit community, size 20×26/8, pages 20 ... 0 1 0

15. ISLAM AND OTHER FAITHS—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community.
Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
Containing a comparison between the teachings of Islam and other faiths, size 20×26/8, pages 52 ... 0 2 0

16. A MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community.
A call to the Western people to Islam, size 17×27/16, pages 44 ... 0 1 0

17. HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community.
Contains workable suggestions to bring about permanent communal peace and amity, size 17×27/8, pages 44 ... 0 2 0

18. THE MUSLIM PRAYER—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community.
A brief description of the Islamic form of worship containing photographic illustrations of the different postures and genuflexions, size 17×27/8, pages 50 ... 0 2 0

19. SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SOLUTION OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM—By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community.
A scholarly and comprehensive survey of the Indian political problems and their solution, size 20×30/16, pages 464 ... 2 0 0

20. A REPLY TO MR. K. L. GAUBA'S QUESTION PROPOSED TO BE PUT IN THE ASSEMBLY—By Maulana Sher Ali. A small pamphlet refuting the charge that the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement used abusive language with regard to the leaders of other communities, size 20×26/16, pages 16 .. 0 1 0

21. EXTRACTS FROM THE HOLY QURAN—Size 20×30/16, pages 404 ... 0 12 0

Can be had of: THE MANAGER

BOOK DEPOT TALIF O ISHAAT, QADIAN, Punjab (India)